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Draft National Mountain Bicycling Strategic Action Plan

AUGUST 2002

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Bureau of Land Management
Washington, D.C.

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Cover: The Antonelli family on Kokopelli's Trail, Loma, Colorado. Photo by Karen Enenkel, Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Association.

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NATIONAL

MOUNTAIN BICYCLING

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

DRAFT

Prepared by:
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Washington, DC

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ABBREVIATIONS

BBM	benefits-based management
BLM	U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management
CCI	cooperative conservation initiative
CCS	challenge cost share
CFR	code of federal regulations
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976
GPS	global positioning system
IMBA	International Mountain Bicycling Association
LAC	limits of acceptable change
LWCF	Lands and Water Conservation Funds
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NLCS	National Landscape Conservation System
NORBA	National Off-Road Bicycling Association
OHV	off-highway vehicle
RAC	Resource Advisory Council
ROS	recreation opportunity spectrum
TMO	trail management objective

NATIONAL MOUNTAIN BICYCLING STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) National Mountain Bicycling Strategic Action Plan (hereafter referred to as Action Plan) is a comprehensive approach to address issues regarding mountain bicycling and other emerging mechanized recreational uses of the public lands. This Action Plan is the second component of a trilogy of action plans focusing on recreational uses of the public lands and comprehensive travel management planning. The first was the National Management Strategy for Motorized Off-Highway Vehicle Use on Public Lands which was finalized in January of 2001. Upon completion of the National Mountain Bicycling Strategic Action Plan, a nonmotorized/ nonmechanized strategy will be developed to meet the needs of visitors such as hikers and equestrians.

The National Mountain Bicycling Strategic Action Plan will focus on guidance and actions for BLM Field Offices, interest groups, and individuals. The Action Plan will seek innovative and proactive approaches to protecting soil, water, wildlife habitat, threatened or endangered plant and animal species, native vegetation, heritage resources, and other resources while providing for high-quality, environmentally-responsible recreational opportunities.

Implementation of this Action Plan will be an ongoing, adaptive approach that will require the continued cooperation and participation of the public. As a guiding document, the plan will be refined and implemented as opportunities arise and funds allow.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Over the years, the number of mountain bicyclists using BLM-managed public lands has increased dramatically. An estimated 13.5 million mountain bicyclists visit public lands each year to enjoy the variety of trails. What was once a low-use activity that was relatively easy to manage has become more complex. Land managers are now challenged with millions of mountain bicyclists and advanced technologies that enable riders to more easily reach remote areas. At the same time, land managers must deal with environmental impacts and visitor conflicts, as well as the need to provide high-quality experiences, information, and education.

The purpose of this Action Plan is to provide guidance to the BLM field offices, interest groups, and individuals to implement on-the-ground actions and resource protection measures relative to mountain bicycle use and other nonmotorized/mechanized uses.

In addition to providing field guidance there are a number of reasons why the BLM is developing this Action Plan. Those reasons include:

- fulfilling BLM's need to update its 1992 Mountain Bicycle Strategy;
- recognizing the changing demographics, increasing populations, emerging technologies, and issues unique to mountain bicycling;
- providing for consistency among BLM states and field offices regarding management approaches;
- making more effective use of existing staff, resources, volunteers, and partnerships;

- assessing planning, environmental and regulatory needs; and
- it was recommended by BLM's National OHV Strategy.

This strategy recognizes, as does the 1992 Mountain Bike Strategy (BLM 1992), that mountain bicycling is an acceptable use of the public lands wherever it is compatible with established resource management objectives. As established by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), the BLM is required to manage the public lands on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield, while protecting natural values. The mission includes recreation management. The BLM believes that implementing this Action Plan will help promote a balance between these sometimes competing principles.

After preparation of the final Action Plan, the BLM will develop a "toolbox" of best practices for mountain bicycle management. It will provide field offices with visible examples of work that has been completed—the successes and the lessons learned.

BACKGROUND

In 1992 a task force of BLM employees prepared a National Mountain Bike Strategy. The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) and other interest groups and individuals took part by commenting and participating through several meetings. This strategy's sunset was in the year 2000.

In 1999 the BLM initiated a national management strategy for off-highway vehicle (OHV) use on public lands. Since management of nonmotorized and motorized vehicle activities on the public lands share many of the same solutions, the draft strategy initially incorporated mountain bicycling. Many of the recommended on-the-ground and administrative actions for OHV management contained in the draft strategy could equally and effectively be applied to mountain bicycling and other trail and road activities. However, based on analysis of the issues and concerns, and the specific unique differences between the activities, BLM, in the final Strategy, determined that mountain bicycle and other nonmotorized vehicle management warranted their own strategy and management guidance.

This Action Plan will update the 1992 strategy, incorporate provisions from the OHV strategy, and include new recommendations from the public.

Highlights of the 1992 Strategy

- "BLM Policy recognizes mountain [bicycling] as an appropriate use of public lands under its jurisdiction.
- Each state will set a goal of trails and miles to be identified and marketed by the year 2000.
- In order to reach the goal, partnerships will be sought at local, state and national levels.
- The BLM National Mountain Bike Outreach Action Plan will be used as a guide to develop local ideas.
- The BLM will identify and implement diverse mountain bicycle opportunities into the multiple use system of trails and roads by the year 2000.
- These opportunities will be enhanced by a proactive, educational program emphasizing safety, fitness, ethics and environmental protection and appreciation."

Highlights from the OHV Strategy

- improve planning for trails;
- regional and local solutions;
- clarify use designations;
- enhance partnerships with interest groups;
- improve signing, maps and education programs;
- secure outside funding sources; and
- develop training for the BLM staff, volunteers, and partners.

Other Activities and Actions

Activities and actions that have occurred over the past 15 years.

- Participation in the first BLM Mountain Bike Seminar, held in Durango, Colorado, during the 1990 World Mountain Bike Championships.

- Between 1994 and 1996, the mountain bicycling community helped the BLM identify a national list of BLM mountain bicycle trail projects that were high priority and in need of funding. During these years, IMBA and the National Off-Road Bicycling Association (NORBA) developed the National Mountain Bike Patrol program, which made its debut on BLM-managed land in Moab, Utah.

- In 1996 BLM and IMBA signed a "Golden Anniversary Partnership Agreement" to promote mountain bicycling opportunities on BLM-managed public land.

- In 1997, the Subaru/IMBA Trail Care Crew began working with the BLM to develop new trails and improve trail maintenance and management of existing trails.

- In 1999 and 2000, IMBA and BLM worked together under an informal agreement that connected the Subaru/IMBA Trail Care Crew with BLM field offices and also enlisted IMBA to help with the National Trails Training Project – a new effort to improve and standardize trails training across various land management agencies.

- In 2002 BLM and IMBA signed a formal assistance agreement for work on projects such as National Mountain Bike Patrol, Subaru/IMBA Trail Care Crew, Epic Rides, Sprockids, National Trails Training Partnerships, on education, and on projects on public lands through planning and implementation.

SCOPE OF THE ACTION PLAN

This Action Plan is proactive and will focus on guidance and actions for BLM Field Offices and interest groups and individuals. The Action Plan will seek innovative and proactive approaches to protecting soil, water, wildlife habitat, threatened or endangered plant and animal species, native vegetation, heritage resources, and other resources while providing for high-quality, environmentally-responsible recreational opportunities. The implementation of this Action Plan will be an ongoing, adaptive approach that will require the continued cooperation and participation of the public. As a guiding document, the Action Plan will be refined and implemented as opportunities arise and funds allow.

This Action Plan is designed to accomplish the following:

- Provide practical management guidance to BLM field offices, interest groups, and individuals regarding mountain bicycle-related activities on BLM-managed public lands.

- Provide recommended actions to protect public land resources, promote safety for all public land visitors, and minimize conflicts among the various users of the public lands.

- Provide guidance on mountain bicycle management to field offices as they prepare the next generation of resource management plans.

- Provide a window to the future for BLM field managers to better understand the technological, demographic, and use trends that will happen with mountain bicycles and other nonmotorized/ mechanized uses over the next 10 years.

- Identify resource and funding needs at state and local levels to improve mountain bicycle management and identify potential outside funding sources.

- Provide practical guidance to improve BLM's capability to provide information and environmental education to mountain bicycle users.

Since the BLM began managing mountain bicycle opportunities in the late 1980s, new technology and opportunities have emerged. Technological advances in frames, suspension, and equipment are enabling riders to travel farther and traverse more rugged terrain.

While user needs for single-track trails and more primitive experience have emerged, a pro-active planning approach could help alleviate concerns over impacts on resources and user conflict. This Action Plan will provide actions to address these concerns and user needs.

THE STRATEGY

The following is a summary of what the Action Plan *is* and *is not*, and what it *can* and *cannot* do.

What it *Is*, What it *Is Not*

This Action Plan ***is***:

- a general guidance document for BLM field offices, interest groups, and individuals on ways to address mountain bicycling and other nonmotorized/mechanized management issues;

- a list of recommended best management practices that may be used by BLM land managers for local planning;

- an effort to assist in the management of mountain bicycling activities with an eye to increased use and new technology;

- an effort to enhance the management and protection of public lands administered by the BLM;

- ideas and recommendations contributed by the public including interest groups and individuals, and

- an approach that reflects public input, offers flexibility (meaning it can, and will, change over time as resource issues emerge and visitor conflicts arise), and seeks to promote local solutions to local problems.

This Strategy ***is not:***

- a decision document—land use plans are, and will continue to be, the principal decision documents guiding BLM land managers. There will continue to be activity plans to address local issues;

- a new regulation;

- a means to close, limit, or open trails and roads to mountain bicycle use;

- a forum for changing any proclamations or legislation relating to national monuments, national conservation areas, designated wilderness and wilderness study areas, national scenic and historic trails, or wild and scenic rivers; or

- a forum for changing existing policy or guidance for accessability issues with respect to wheelchair users or other mobility devices.

What it *Can do* and *Cannot do*

If fully implemented, this Action Plan **can:**

- focus specifically on mountain bicycle use while also recognizing the emerging trends and technologies of mechanized vehicles that may warrant different or additional management in the future (when most land use plans were developed, mountain bicycling was an emerging use on public lands);

- provide mountain bicycling management guidance for BLM managers in areas where mountain bicycling has increased, new

technologies are appearing, and plans are out-of-date or are nonexistent;

- promote consistency of decision-making and management of nonmotorized/ mechanized use of public lands within the BLM by clarifying guidance and promoting understanding of mountain bicycling management goals;

- highlight the additional funding, staffing, volunteers, and partners needed by the BLM to effectively manage mountain bicycle use;

- provide guidance to minimize potential conflicts among user groups;

- promote responsible mountain bicycle and related use that will protect soil, water, wildlife habitat, threatened or endangered plant and animal species, native vegetation, heritage resources, and other resources while providing for high quality, environmentally responsible recreational opportunities; and

- review and recommend changes to existing regulations, if appropriate.

However, this Action Plan ***cannot:***

- formulate regulations (which can occur only in the formal rulemaking process, with full public particlpation);

- change any legislation, proclamation, or executive order; or

- provide the additional funds and staffing needed for effective mountain bicycling management.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The BLM is developing this Action Plan through a public process that will elicit ideas and proposed recommendations for the management of mountain bicycling on BLM-managed public lands. The BLM recognizes the important role the interested public will play in developing and implementing the plan. The continued participation of the public will be vital for successful implementation. The partnership, cooperation, and support of interest groups and individuals will be critical to implementing effective on-the-ground mountain bicycling management solutions.

Many comments received by the BLM on mountain bicycling management came from the mountain bicycling community during the development of the draft National Management Strategy for Motorized Off-Highway Vehicle Use on Public Lands in 2000. The BLM conducted 49 public meetings and received and 19,000 comment letters either through the mail or electronically. Most of the comments pointed out the unique differences between motorized and nonmotorized (mechanized/human powered) vehicles and the differences in issues and concerns surrounding both types of activity. After considering this point of view, the BLM's final OHV Strategy determined that the management of mountain bicycling and other nonmotorized vehicles warranted its own strategy and management guidance.

The National Mountain Bicycling Strategic Action Team started its planning effort in the summer of 2001. The team was invited to the International Mountain Bicycling Association summit conference in Moab, Utah, in April 2002, for a session on the future of mountain bicycling on public lands. The IMBA audience generated numerous concerns and shared ideas for solving problems and enhancing mountain bicycling opportunities on public lands. Concerns included protecting natural and heritage resources, mitigating environmental impacts, education, and high-quality recreation experiences.

A letter announcing the availability of the draft National Mountain Bicycling Strategic Action Plan will be sent to all groups and individuals who commented on the draft national strategy for motorized OHV use on public lands. The document will be posted for public review and comment on the BLM's national website at www.blm.gov . There will be a 30-day public comment period for this draft document.

Comments can be submitted electronically through the website or via U.S. mail or facsimile by sending to:

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Note: Individuals wishing to withhold their name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, may request confidentiality by prominently stating so at the beginning of their written comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

MANAGEMENT THEMES, GOALS, AND ACTIONS

Overview

The BLM launched this draft Action Plan in response to public comment in the National Management Strategy for Motorized Off-Highway Vehicle Use on Public Lands. That plan specifically stated: "In 1992, the BLM coordinated closely with the International Mountain Bicycle Association to jointly develop one of the first partnerships and national strategies involving mountain bicycles.

Today, the BLM acknowledges that review and updating the mountain bicycle strategy and guidance is a necessity." This Action Plan is BLM's response to reviewing and updating that existing strategy.

During the development of the draft National Management Strategy for Motorized Off-Highway Vehicle Use on Public Lands in 2000, approximately 19,000 comment letters were received, either electronically or by mail. The majority of those letters received requested that BLM withdraw mountain bicycling from the OHV strategy.

Since management of nonmotorized and motorized vehicle activities on the public lands share many of the same solutions, the draft OHV strategy initially incorporated mountain bicycling. Many of the recommended on-the-ground and administrative actions for OHV management contained in the draft strategy could equally and effectively be applied to mountain bicycling and other trail and road activities. These included improved planning for trails, regional and local solutions, clarified use designations, potential for partnerships with interest groups, need for improved signing, maps and education programs, and potential for outside funding sources. However, based on analysis of the issues and concerns, and the specific unique differences between the activities, BLM, in the final OHV strategy, determined that mountain bicycle and other nonmotorized vehicle management warranted their own strategy and management guidance.

Themes

Themes that emerged from the OHV strategy and public comments will be addressed in this Action Plan. They are:

- Coordination
- Education/Interpretation/Information
- Planning and Environmental Considerations.
- Funding
- Emerging Issues
- Regulations

The themes are not listed in any specific order. Implementation of actions will be dependent on agency appropriations and priorities, and partnerships and collaborative assistance.

Coordination

Proper mountain bicycle management relies on good coordination and communication both internally and externally, including the general public, mountain bicycle interest groups and organizations, environmental organizations, state, local and tribal governments, and other agencies.

Issue: How can BLM do a better job of coordinating mountain bicycle management?

Rationale: The BLM must coordinate within the agency to assure appropriate consideration of mountain bicycle use in land-use planning, and subsequent management activities. Since mountain bicycling use often crosses multiple agency boundaries it is essential that BLM also coordinate with other agencies. Consistency in management should result in a better understanding of issues and concerns by visitors; improved compliance with rules, regulations, and ethical practices; reduced conflict with other visitors; and minimized impacts to natural resources.

Coordination with community leadership, organizations, and the mountain bicycle industry will allow the BLM to stay up-to-date regarding the needs and concerns of the public. Coordination with emergency services and volunteers will be essential to enhance the safety of visitors and improve opportunities to educate visitors on management issues.

Management Goal 1: The BLM will coordinate within the agency and with other agencies to provide diverse mountain bicycle opportunities and appropriate resource management.

Action Item 1: Consider opportunities for mountain bicycle use during the development of all BLM land use plans.

Action Item 2: Provide technical on-the-ground training for BLM field staff and managers.

Action Item 3: Develop a "tool box" for field staff that will offer examples of successful mountain bicycle management efforts and lessons learned.

Action Item 4: Emphasize interagency coordination to provide consistent management, application of regulations, boundary identification, and signage.

Action Item 5: Establish a list of people, both within and outside the agency, who have experience managing mountain bicycling use, and who would be willing to offer expertise or assistance to field staff.

Management Goal 2: Coordinate with community leaders, organizations, and the mountain bicycle industry to enhance recreational opportunities and the safety of visitors, and provide opportunities to educate visitors on management issues.

Action Item 1: Encourage community leaders and interested organizations or individuals to participate in land-use planning.

Action Item 2: Recruit volunteers for trail inventory, trail construction and maintenance, monitoring, and for visitor services.

Action Item 3: Coordinate with local search and rescue to ensure that access routes are identified and evacuation procedures are established to efficiently and effectively service popular riding areas.

Action Item 4: BLM and partners will provide training and education for volunteers.

Action Item 5: Coordinate agreements with local communities and interest groups to help the BLM stay up-to-date regarding the needs and concerns of the public.

Education/Interpretation/ Information

Education, training, interpretation, and information-sharing efforts are more effective than regulatory management approaches.

Issue: How can BLM communicate a more effective message through education, training programs, interpretation, and informational materials relating to mountain bicycle management?

Rationale: The BLM 1992 Mountain Bike Strategy called for a "...proactive, educational program emphasizing safety, fitness, ethics, and environmental protection and appreciation." In addition, public comment from the national OHV strategy indicated a need to emphasize "a responsible-use ethic among public land users." Recognizing that education, training, interpretation, and information-sharing efforts are preferable to regulatory management approaches, the BLM needs to incorporate these techniques into mountain bicycle management. Educational efforts will promote resource protection, responsible mountain bicycle use, and cooperation among user groups, special recreation permit holders, and other service providers.

Management Goal 1: Develop a consistent mountain bicycle ethics message—products, tools, and recommendations designed to foster a responsible use ethic for mountain bicycling within the trail community.

Action Item 1: Adopt and distribute the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) *Rules of the Trail* (see Appendix 1), and the principles of the "Leave No Trace, Inc." and "Tread Lightly! Inc.," programs (see Appendixes 2 and 3), and incorporate them for use in each local BLM mountain bicycle management program.

Action Item 2: Expand and enhance BLM's relationship with the"Tread Lightly! Inc." and "Leave No Trace" organizations and with other federal agencies to communicate mountain bicycle and trail-use ethics through education and information.

Action Item 3: Incorporate ethics messages emphasizing that mountain bicyclists are members of a larger trails community.

Management Goal 2: Expand interpretive opportunities along trail routes and incorporate information into mountain bicycle management as a means of communicating the relationship between resource protection and responsible mountain bicycling.

Action Item 1: Use interdisciplinary teams to produce informational products and interpretive programs with accurate information and consistent messages that portray mountain bicycling opportunities on public land. Those products could include signs, maps, web sites, brochures, videos, power point programs, and CD ROMs.

Action Item 2: Develop more detailed descriptions of mountain bicycling areas and trails that will allow the public to determine the appropriate route for their individual recreational interests and abilities.

Action Item 3: Develop a clear and consistent method of on-the-ground route identification and signing.

Action Item 4: Pursue opportunities for volunteer involvement in mountain bicycle management and promote a sense of self-regulation among mountain bicyclists on public lands.

Management Goal 3: Pursue relationships with mountain bicycle industry, equipment, service providers, and communities to enhance marketing opportunities for education and information and increase awareness of public lands resources and trends.

Action Item 1: Develop an information package that will help establish open communication lines between BLM, other land management agencies, local businesses, industry and mountain bicycling groups.

Action Item 2: Establish an information network to ensure that BLM land managers are up-to-date on emerging technologies and trends related to mountain bicycling.

Action Item 3: Develop standard stipulations for commercial mountain bicycle use relating to the BLM

information, education, and interpretation goals. For example, require Special Recreation Permit holders and other service providers to use mountain bicycle ethics messages in their operations.

Management Goal 4: Provide education and training for BLM field managers, staff, and volunteers.

Action Item 1: Identify training needs, use existing training courses, and develop new training in cooperation with interested organizations. Examples of available training can be found on the National Trails Training Partnership website, www.nttp.net.

Action Item 2: Identify, recruit, and train instructors to deliver all facets of trails planning and management.

Action Item 3: Encourage BLM staff, field managers, volunteers, and members of the mountain bicycling community to plan rides to learn about the resources and discuss issues along the trail.

Action Item 4: Organize events such as volunteer trail work rides and interpretive presentations to encourage active participation in mountain bicycle management efforts.

Planning and Environmental Considerations

Good planning and public involvement is the foundation of the BLM's decision-making process. It is the key to reducing adverse environmental and social impacts associated with public land uses and providing high-quality recreational opportunities. The BLM is required to conduct resource management planning by FLPMA of 1976.

Issue 1: How to best plan, design, construct, maintain, and operate mountain bicycle trail systems.

Rationale: Increased popularity of mountain bicycling and technological advances have created a greater need to consider all aspects of on-the-ground mountain bicycle and trail management issues, relating to both resource and social conditions. There is also a need to provide guidance for mountain bicycle use in special management areas, such as the National Landscape Conservation System.

Management Goal 1: Address mountain bicycle issues and concerns throughout the land-use planning process.

Action Item 1: Conduct a thorough analysis of issues and concerns related to mountain bicycling during the land-use planning process and other interdisciplinary planning efforts.

Action Item 2: Educate mountain bicyclists about the proper procedures for identifying, planning for, designing, and building new trails and integrated trail systems on BLM-managed lands. Focus on the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and cultural resource protection laws.

Action Item 3: Use a variety of public involvement techniques during the planning process to assure meaningful input by mountain bicyclists and other user groups; (Ad-Hoc committees, task force committees, field site visits). Resource Advisory Councils will be used as part of the public input process.

Action Item 4: Make use of outside expertise and labor to help plan, design, or construct and maintain trails. (Examples include Subaru/IMBA Trail-Care-Crew, trail crew swaps, prison crews, and AmeriCorps programs.)

Action Item 5: Develop a national "Adopt-a-Trail" program to guide state and local programs to assure needed monitoring and maintenance is accomplished on key trail systems.

Action Item 6: Develop guidelines that would outline the elements of a good integrated trail system such as stacked loops, directional travel on specific single-track trails, and down-hill trails, and freeride areas. (An example is IMBA's "Building Better Trails" manual.)

Action Item 7: Involve city and county parks and recreation planners to identify opportunities where community trail systems can be linked with BLM trails to help bridge the urban interface gap.

Action Item 8: Work with trail user groups to identify potential user conflicts and suggested solutions to address these conflicts.

Issue 2: How to sustain integrated trail systems while protecting resources and providing high-quality recreational opportunities for all trail users.

Rationale: Through planning and monitoring BLM can mitigate the social and resource/trail impacts of overcrowding in order to preserve a high-quality recreational experience for all trail users, from beginners and family to experts. Planning should be flexible and adaptable in order to adjust to unanticipated trends and changes in the recreation environment.

Management Goal 2: Clearly define the process for making decisions regarding mountain bicycle use opportunities related to other recreation and trail uses.

Action Item 1: Employ a variety of planning and monitoring techniques such as trail use emphasis areas, benefits-based management (BBM), recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS), limits of acceptable change (LAC), adaptive management, trail management objective (TMO), and visitor preference studies. (See Glossary)

Action Item 2: Clearly define where mountain bicycling fits within the ROS and the kinds of physical, social, and administrative settings that are essential for providing the many kinds of mountain bicycling opportunities. Include the full range and variety of riding opportunities, experiences, and benefits from beginners and families to experts and freeriders.

Action Item 3: Develop a source book of internal and external individuals who have expertise in integrated trail system management and make it available to all BLM offices.

Action Item 4: Educate all trail users on the process BLM uses to make trail use decisions. Produce a trail planning and development process fact sheet and make available to the public.

Issue 3: How can recreation facilities be provided in a timely and cost-effective manner?

Rationale: Mountain bicycle use has increased dramatically in certain locations and recreation facilities are needed to support or mitigate that use (parking, trailhead facilities).

Management Goal 3: Provide needed infrastructure and facilities to accommodate increasing levels of mountain bicycle use.

Action Item 1: Develop partnerships with local mountain bicycle clubs and organizations and work together to apply for grants which could be used to pay for needed facilities. (The BLM can also apply.) Work closely with your local state trails program for grant money.

Action Item 2: Work with state and local governments and businesses to encourage them to fund certain costs associated with mountain bicycle use that economically benefit their community and the public (such as toilets at trailheads, gravel for parking).

Issue 4: How can increased access be provided in areas where legal public access to potential mountain bicycle trails is not available?

Rationale: Many areas with the potential for mountain bicycle use are currently unavailable because of BLM's dispersed land pattern, and lack of legal public access through private land.

Due to the rapidly increasing popularity of mountain bicycling new areas are needed to prevent overcrowding of existing areas. Private land trespass has become an increasing problem in some areas.

Management Goal 4: Improve legal access to public land in areas that would increase opportunities for mountain bicyclists, including creating long-distance trails.

Action Item 1: Actively seek, either through exchange, purchase, easements, or agreements, critical lands offering key access to new trail areas or connections between trails.

Action Item 2: Encourage the development of trail master plans that will identify future critical connections and identify ways to protect critical corridors from urban interface exchanges.

Issue 5: How best to provide and preserve single-track trails.

Rationale: Single-track trails exemplify the highest quality riding experience for most mountain bicyclists. In order to maintain this experience attention needs to be given to trail width, resource condition, other visitors, design elements, and visitor behavior. A well-designed and maintained single-track trail will also benefit other trail users.

Management Goal 5: Maintain the quality of existing single track mountain bicycle trails.

Action Item 1: Include information in publications, at trailheads, and on web sites related to mountain bicycling about how to "correctly" pass while riding on a single-track trail and how to minimize environmental damage while riding on single-track trails.

Action Item 2: Retrofit or reconstruct existing trail segments to enhance the flow of the trail system, which will encourage users to stay on the trail while creating a better riding experience. Example: replace switchbacks with climbing turns.

Action Item 3: Develop universally agreed upon definitions of single-track trail, trail, and route.

Action Item 4: Implement "directional travel" (see Glossary) on appropriate single-track trails to preserve the width and reduce conflict with other visitors.

Issue 6: How best to identify and manage the high use and growth of mountain bicycling in certain areas and the resulting impacts.

Rationale: Mountain bicycling "hot spots" are existing or emerging areas that will require significant resources to manage in a manner that protects the resource and provides quality recreational experiences. One estimate is that these popular areas will double and possibly triple in number in the next 10 years.

Management Goal 6: Improve the ability of managers and the bicycling community to proactively respond to rapidly increasing levels of mountain bicycling use in key "hot spot" areas, as well as in emerging areas.

Action Item 1: Using a team approach—including other agencies and interest groups—identify, map, and prioritize existing and emerging "hot spots."

Action Item 2: Coordinate with community and interest group leaders and service providers to help them understand the impacts—economic, social and

cultural—of a developing "hot spot," or destination mountain bicycling area.

Action Item 3: Encourage local mountain bicyclists to form a National Mountain Bike Patrol Unit to assist in educating and assisting riders as well as monitoring trail conditions and resource impacts.

Action Item 4: Encourage communication among local user groups and trail organizations to work through conflict and help with education, trail development, and trail maintenance. For example, forming coordinating councils made up of agency representatives and members of the trails community to rapidly address issues as they emerge, posting a calender of events in local newspapers and local bicycle shops, developing web sites, and e-mail lists.

Action Item 5: Coordinate with the public and private sector organizations to promote other less popular riding areas to take the pressure off of high-use trails.

Action Item 6: Coordinate with tourism destination marketing organizations, industry, media, and other service providers, to ensure marketing reflects land-use planning objectives.

Issue 7: How does the BLM determine and obtain the information it needs to continue making sound decisions regarding mountain bicycle use?

Rationale: Gathering proper inventory or monitoring data is essential to making sustainable and sound resource and social decisions. Selecting what to monitor is a critical component in data collection. Monitoring methods should be accurate and cost-effective while answering the questions asked. Analysis of monitoring data should result in meaningful change.

Management Goal 7: Improve the ability to collect accurate and timely inventory and monitoring data to detect and evaluate the impacts caused by mountain bicycling and other recreational uses.

Action Item 1: During planning, and as necessary, establish monitoring criteria, indicators, standards, and thresholds, that will result in meaningful data collections, analysis, and decision making.

Action Item 2: Recruit and properly train field staff in the use of appropriate technologies, such as global positioning system (GPS), and monitoring methods to inventory and monitor existing and potential mountain bicycle trail opportunities.

Action Item 3: Encourage the development of volunteer mountain bicycle patrols and adopt-a-trail agreements to help the BLM monitor trails as well as educate users.

Funding

Rising and concentrated recreation use has exceeded the BLM's funding capability.

Issue 1: How will BLM identify, plan for, and obtain immediate and future funding needs to manage integrated trail systems and comprehensive travel management?

Rationale: The BLM must leverage appropriated and other existing sources of funding in order to meet current and future needs. It also needs new sources of funding, including revenue from visitor fees, outside funding and grants to manage mountain bicycling and other trail uses effectively.

Management Goal 1: The BLM will work with partners and other interest groups to adequately fund the management of mountain bicycling on public lands (planning, maintenance, education, resource protection, and enforcement).

Action Item 1: Encourage field offices and partners to develop business plans to assess the cost of managing mountain bicycle activities in high use/intensively managed areas.

Action Item 2: Encourage partners to seek alternative funding sources such as grants, assistance agreements, and in-kind services to assist implementation of BLM land use and business plans.

Action Item 3: Encourage partners to assist with funding for construction of new trails and maintenance of existing trails.

Management Goal 2: The BLM will emphasize a diversity of agency funding approaches for implementation of the Action Plan in the annual budget submissions to Congress.

Action Item 1: Encourage field offices to develop funding strategies through Challenge Cost Share (CCS), Cooperative Conservation Initiative (CCI), and assistance agreements.

Action Item 2: Encourage internal collaborative funding efforts, beyond recreation management funding, to implement integrated trail systems and comprehensive travel management for both resource- and recreation-related benefits.

Management Goal 3: The BLM will pursue outside funding and generate visitor revenue sources.

Action Item 1: Identify all potential outside funding sources and share them throughout the BLM. A cost-share program should be used to leverage outside partnerships and funding.

Action Item 2: Encourage field offices to consider the collection of fees for appropriate projects and services when developing their business plans.

Action Item 3: Communicate to the public that visitor fees should not be charged for access only. Field offices are advised to use fee determination criteria as outlined in Lands and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) regulations.

Action Item 4: Encourage field offices to consider legal donation programs.

Action Item 5: Compile a list of successful trail-related fee and donation programs and share them throughout the BLM.

Management Goal 4: The BLM will form new or expand existing partnerships with recreation service providers and industry, including manufacturers and retailers.

Action Item 1: Form a workgroup with interested manufacturers, retailers, and interest groups to take a fresh look and determine the most appropriate strategies for the mutual benefit of all parties.

Action Item 2: Form new or expand existing partnerships with manufacturers and retailers to collaboratively provide funding or in-kind services for on-the-ground implementation of visitor services, interpretation, information, education and other mountain bicycle and trail-related services.

Management Goal 5: The BLM will work with communities to establish and fund areas where intensive management is desired for mountain bicycle use.

Action Item 1: Develop a "how to guide" of best practices for obtaining community involvement, designing and building community-based trail systems, building partnerships, and developing a cadre of volunteers, creative funding of trail development and signage.

Action Item 2: Encourage tour operators, outfitters, bicycle shop owners, and other interested businesses to become more involved in planning, proposing, and developing mountain bicycle trails, funding educational efforts such as maps, brochures, and information kiosks.

Action Item 3: Explore innovative funding sources and encourage partnerships to assist in managing mountain bicycle use on public lands.

Emerging Issues

Provide a window to the future for BLM field managers to better understand the technological, demographic, and use trends that will happen with mountain bicycles and other nonmotorized/mechanized uses over the next 10 years.

Issue 1: How will emerging technologies in the development of mountain bicycles affect the ability of the public to access public lands? What type of impacts could occur and what pro-active measures can the BLM take to better manage this type of use?

Rationale: Technology, trends, and demographics related to the management of mountain bicycles will continue to change. What was once a simple, rigid bicycle with knobby tires has evolved into a high-tech bicycle with shock absorbers in front and back, more gears, lighter weight materials and improved handling characteristics that allow riders to travel deeper and farther into public lands. Technological improvements are allowing the production of bicycles with long-travel front and rear shock absorption that allows bicyclists to descend steep, rugged, rocky terrain at relatively high speeds.

New activities, technologies, and equipment lead to greater expectations. Effective management must include a combination of enforcement, planning, guidance, and education to ensure resource protection and quality experiences from all user groups. In addition, the demographics of the West have changed, and so have the needs and demands of the public. The BLM must be able to be proactive in its management to assure quality experiences for the public while protecting resources.

Management Goal: The BLM will be cognizant of changes in technology in order to ensure that mountain bicycling uses are appropriate to the opportunities available, and that changes which have the potential for impacts on resources are addressed.

Action Item 1: Establish long-term relationships with trail organizations, bicycle manufacturers, and retailers to better understand trends and emerging technologies.

Action Item 2: Track mountain bicycling media and websites such as Mtbr.com to stay up-to-date on trends.

Action Item 3: Identify and develop a dialogue with representatives of highly specialized user groups, such as downhill/freeriders and "North Shore" riders (riding on structures made for that purpose). Locate appropriate areas where specialized or extreme activities can be done without additional impact on natural and heritage resources.

Issue 2: What will the future needs and desired experiences of the public be regarding mountain bicycling opportunities on public lands?

Rationale: Population and demographic changes in the West are influencing the way the public views lands administered by the BLM. Demand for recreational opportunities of all types will increase. Rural/urban population interface issues will escalate, and high-risk recreation activities will continue to gain popularity. As urbanization absorbs the front country, some BLM-managed lands may be well suited for "urban trail parks," or trails that compress a lot of miles into a relatively small space. Demand is increasing for high-quality trail opportunities that are reasonably close to home. (American Trails has the goal of providing recreational trail opportunities within 15 minutes of everyone's residence.)

Management Goal: Recognize that trail users will have a diversity of preferences and expectations.

Action Item 1: Conduct a visitor preference study and update it every five years. Share results with interest groups, grazing lessees, and other agencies and landowners.

Action Item 2: Predict and accommodate change by establishing relationships with the scientific community to gain a better understanding of existing research and initiating new research as needed.

Issue 3: What other emerging or growing mechanized uses and activities are occurring or are likely to occur over the next 10 to 15 years on public lands?

Rationale: While this plan will not provide specific guidance on those mechanized activities, it acknowledges that there are other activities of a similar nature that managers should be aware of. Some of those activities are road bicycle touring, scooters, mountainboards, skateboards, in-line skates, and land yachts. Wheelchairs and other mobility devices are addressed under other policies.

Management Goal: Stay current with other activities using mechanized equipment, and help BLM field offices prepare to administer them.

Action Item 1: Track emerging outdoor activities through websites, "Xtreme" sports magazines, and other media.

Action Item 2: Clarify the distinction between mechanized (muscle-powered) and motorized uses. Any device that uses a power source other than muscles should be classified as an OHV, and subject to the national OHV strategy.

Regulations

The BLM's off-road vehicle regulations in 43 CFR 8340-8344 (Off-Road Vehicles) do not specifically reference mountain bicycles or other nonmotorized or mechanized modes of transportation.

Issue 1: How can BLM regulate, plan for, and enforce protection of resources, safety of visitors, and minimizing conflicts.

Rationale: As currently written, the off-road vehicle regulations do not pertain to the management of mountain bicycles or other mechanized modes of transportation. Although FLPMA recognizes recreation as an appropriate activity on public lands, specific guidance and direction for managing mountain bicycle use and other nonmotorized/ mechanized activities does not exist. This guidance is needed to adequately and effectively manage these activities, much like the agency is able to designate areas and trails for motorized use. (Guidance should consider regulations that take into account both resource and social impacts.) The agency is now recognizing that comprehensive travel management planning is essential to establish integrated trail systems and to meet the needs of all visitors.

There is also a need to provide guidance for mountain bicycle use in special management areas, such as the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS).

Management Goal - Develop regulations that provide for the effective management of mountain bicycles and other mechanized modes of transportation on BLM-managed public lands.

Action Item 1: Review 43 CFR 8340-8344 for rewriting and adapting the rules for regulating the use of mountain bicycles and other mechanized modes of transportation. (Regulations applying to nonmotorized trail use could be addressed in the upcoming nonmotorized trail strategy.)

Action Item 2: Use a team of internal and external advisors (including Resource Advisory Councils [RACs]) to develop regulations applicable to the use of mountain bicycles and other mechanized modes of transportation on BLM-managed public land, including the National Landscape Conservation System. Timing of the promulgation of regulations should coincide with release of the nonmotorized trail strategy.

Action Item 3: Use and enforce existing regulations such as 43 CFR 8364, supplemental rules, planning decisions, and proclamations and legislation.

Action Item 4: Convene a focus group of internal and external leaders to address issues related to NLCS proclamations and legislation where direction for mountain bicycles is unclear or nonexistent for regulatory consideration.

Action Item 5: To encourage compliance with any regulations developed, emphasis should be placed on educating the public and staff to the appropriate interpretation of the regulations. Following an adequate period of time to ensure understanding of the regulations, enforcement should also be implemented to encourage compliance.

GLOSSARY

adaptive management: A process for continually improving management policies and practices by learning from outcomes of operational programs and new scientific information.

assistance agreements: A means to transfer money, property, services or anything of value to a recipient to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by federal statute.

benefits based management (BBM): An expanded conceptual framework that views the provision of recreation as a production process for an entire service delivery system composed of other key natural resource agencies, private sector businesses, and local government officials. It strongly emphasizes collaboration between these managing partners who all have a role in affecting the types of recreation opportunities and benefits produced. Benefits based management plans contain objectives for explicitly stated activities, experiences, and benefit outputs (that is, opportunities) and outcomes (that is, their realization). The plans also contain prescriptions for the kinds of physical, social, and administrative settings that must be maintained for the production and realization of these targeted experience and benefit outputs and outcomes. Management actions, marketing efforts and monitoring are all directed towards achieving the explicitly stated objectives in collaboration with the managing partners.

challenge cost share (CCS): Challenge cost share projects are partnerships with other government agencies, private organizations, institutions, corporations, and so forth, working together to accomplish common objectives.

climbing turn: A turn that makes the transition from one leg to the next as a trail ascends (or descends) a hill. Climbing turns are used on shallow slopes, usually not exceeding a grade of 7 percent. (Steeper slopes require more complex—and much more difficult to build—turns known as switchbacks.)

Cooperative Conservation Initiative (CCI): The Cooperative Conservation Initiative funds stewardship on working landscapes and stimulates conservation innovation.

directional travel: A management technique, generally employed on heavily used trails, that requires mountain bicycles to travel the same direction on a trail. On shared-use trails, pedestrians and equestrians often travel in the opposite direction, so they encounter mountain bicycles face-to-face rather than being overtaken from behind.

downhill-specific bicycles: See "freeride"

recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS): Recreational Opportunity Spectrum is a planning and management framework whereby recreation area management objectives are defined. The ROS process provides a framework for defining classes or outdoor recreation environments, activities and experience opportunities. The settings, activities, and opportunities for obtaining experiences have been arranged along a continuum or "spectrum" divided into six classes: (1) primitive, (2) semiprimitive nonmotorized, (3) semiprimitive motorized, (4) roaded natural, (5) rural, and (6) urban. The resulting ROS analysis defines specific geographic areas on the ground, each one encompassing one of the unique recreation opportunity classes.

Epic Rides Program: A program developed by IMBA and industry partners that highlights different trails and trail systems around the world. The program, which attempts to encourage mountain bicyclists to explore lesser-known riding areas, combines one day of trail work and one day of riding.

freeride: This refers both to a bicycle type and a style or riding. "Freeride" bicycles use long-travel suspension (5 to 7 inches or longer), which allows riders to descend rugged, rocky areas at a relatively high speed. These bicycles are heavier than cross-country bicycles—weighing 30 to 40 pounds—and as a result are not generally ridden where significant climbing is required. Ski resorts are popular freeriding venues, as are areas where bicycles and riders can be shuttled by vehicle up to the start of the ride.

hot spots: Areas that have reached a "critical mass" of popularity, drawing mountain bicyclists from well beyond the local community. Some hot spots, such as Moab and Fruita, have become mountain bicycling destinations, with the resulting economic, resource, and social impacts. Communities may encourage visitors to these areas by hosting "fat tire festivals" and races.

International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA): A nonprofit organization that promotes socially and environmentally responsible riding. IMBA's mission is to create, enhance, and preserve trail opportunities for mountain bikers worldwide.

limits of acceptable change (LAC): Limits of acceptable change is a planning and management framework that requires managers to define desired physical and social conditions and to undertake actions to maintain or achieve these conditions. The focus is shifted from "how much use is too much" to "what are the environmental and social conditions desired in an area." The process is used to determine what physical and social indicators and standards could be used to monitor the change taking place in various recreational settings. It is also used to identify specific management actions targeted at preventing unacceptable social and resource impacts from occurring.

Lands and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1964: (16 U.S.C. 4601-4) The purposes of this Act "are to assist in preserving, developing, and assuring accessibility to all citizens of the United States of America of present and future generations and visitors who are lawfully present within the boundaries of the United States of America such quality and quantity of outdoor recreation resources as may be available and are necessary and desirable for individual active participation in such recreation and to strengthen the health and vitality of the citizens of the United States by

(1) providing funds for and authorizing Federal assistance to the States in planning, acquisition, and development of needed land and water areas and facilities and
(2) providing funds for the Federal acquisition and development of certain lands and other areas."

National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS): The Bureau of Land Management has established the National Landscape Conservation System to help protect some of the nation's most remarkable and rugged landscapes. The system includes the agency's National Monuments, Congressionally designated National Conservation Areas, and other areas designated for important scientific and ecological characteristics.

North Shore riding: This term, taken from the British Columbia locale where the style first gained popularity, refers to "stunt" riding on structures, including balance beams, rock piles, teeter-totters, and ladder bridges.

public lands: Any land or interest in lands owned by the United States and administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management, except lands located on the outer Continental Shelf and lands held for the benefit of Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos. (43 CFR 1601.0-5)

route: A generic term that includes roads, trails, and other travel corridors.

single-track trail: A narrow trail, usually no more than 24 inches wide, that allows users to experience a feeling of closeness with the environment they are passing through. For mountain bicyclists, single-track trails may require more skill to negotiate, but most mountain bicyclists prefer the challenge and closeness afforded by single-track to wider trails or "double-track," such as Jeep roads.

Sprockids: An IMBA-sponsored program that offers young people a positive and fun way to get involved in mountain bicycling while helping them build self-esteem. Sprockids clubs lead all types of youth mountain bicycling events, including fun rides, skills clinics, and races.

special recreation permit: Special recreation permits (SRPs) are authorizations which allow for recreational uses of the public lands and related waters. They are issued as a means to control visitor use, protect recreational and natural resources, provide for the health and safety of visitors, and as a mechanism to accommodate commercial recreational use of public lands.

stacked loop trail system: A trail system that is designed to provide shorter, less technically demanding loops for beginners and family rides, combined with longer loops that are also more technically challenging. A good stacked loop system will have a beginner level trail, possibly two or three intermediate loops, and one or two expert loops.

trail: A linear travel corridor for use by many types of activities.

trail management objective (TMO): A trail-by-trail approach to setting planning objectives for specific trails within a trail system. The analysis process includes analysis and categorization of types and levels of use, maintenance standards and resource objectives. After trails are constructed and used they are monitored and compared to the standard.

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APPENDIX 1
International Mountain Bicycling Association
Rules of the Trail

[Source: http://www.imba.com/]

The way we ride today shapes mountain bike trail access tomorrow. Do your part to preserve and enhance our sport's access and image by observing the following rules of the trail, formulated by IMBA, the International Mountain Bicycling Association. These rules are recognized around the world as the standard code of conduct for mountain bikers. IMBA's mission is to promote mountain bicycling that is environmentally sound and socially responsible.

1. Ride On Open Trails Only.

Respect trail and road closures (ask if uncertain); avoid trespassing on private land; obtain permits or other authorization as may be required. Federal and state Wilderness areas are closed to cycling. The way you ride will influence trail management decisions and policies.

2. Leave No Trace.

Be sensitive to the dirt beneath you. Recognize different types of soils and trail construction; practice low-impact cycling. Wet and muddy trails are more vulnerable to damage. When the trailbed is soft, consider other riding options. This also means staying on existing trails and not creating new ones. Don't cut switchbacks. Be sure to pack out at least as much as you pack in.

3. Control Your Bicycle!

Inattention for even a second can cause problems. Obey all bicycle speed regulations and recommendations.

4. Always Yield Trail.

Let your fellow trail users know you're coming. A friendly greeting or bell is considerate and works well; don't startle others. Show your respect when passing by slowing to a walking pace or even stopping. Anticipate other trail users around corners or in blind spots. Yielding means slow down, establish communication, be prepared to stop if necessary and pass safely.

5. Never Scare Animals.

All animals are startled by an unannounced approach, a sudden movement, or a loud noise. This can be dangerous for you, others, and the animals. Give animals extra room and time to adjust to you. When passing horses use special care and follow directions from the horseback riders (ask if uncertain). Running cattle and disturbing wildlife is a serious offense. Leave gates as you found them, or as marked.

6. Plan Ahead.

Know your equipment, your ability, and the area in which you are riding -- and prepare accordingly. Be self-sufficient at all times, keep your equipment in good repair, and carry necessary supplies for changes in weather or other conditions. A well-executed trip is a satisfaction to you and not a burden to others. Always wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear.

Keep trails open by setting a good example of environmentally sound and socially responsible off-road cycling.

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APPENDIX 2
Principles of Leave No Trace

[Source: Leave No Trace, Inc. http://www.lnt.org/]

The Leave No Trace Principles of outdoor ethics form the framework of Leave No Trace's message:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
- Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
- Visit in small groups. Split larger parties into groups of 4-6.
- Repackage food to minimize waste.
- Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
- Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.
- In popular areas:
  - Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
  - Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
  - Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
- In pristine areas:
  - Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
  - Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

Dispose of Waste Properly

- Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods.
- Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.
- Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
- Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

Leave What You Find

- Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

Minimize Campfire Impacts

- Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.
- Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
- Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.

Respect Wildlife

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
- Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
- Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
- Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.
- Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
- Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.

APPENDIX 3
Tread Lightly's
Guide to Responsible Mountain Biking
[Source: Tread Lightly! Inc.]

Preparation

- Obtain a map of the area you wish to explore and determine which areas are open for use.
- Contact the land manager for area restrictions and if crossing private property, be sure to ask permission from the land owner.
- Check the weather forecast.
- Prepare for the unexpected by packing a small backpack full of emergency items.

Safety on the trail

- Wear a helmet, eye protection and other safety gear.
- Buddy up with two or three riders as riding solo can leave you vulnerable if you have an accident or breakdown.
- Drinking and riding don't mix.

Rules and common courtesy

- Be considerate of others on the road or trail.
- Ride only where permitted.
- Leave gates as you find them.
- Yield the right of way to those passing or traveling uphill.
- Pack out what you pack in.
- Remember, designated wilderness areas are reserved for the most primitive outdoor adventure.

Minimum impact camping

- Select lightweight equipment, possibly in earth-tone colors that will blend with the surroundings.
- Use existing campsites whenever possible.
- Avoid building fires.

Negotiating terrain

- When climbing, shift to a gear that provides comfortable forward momentum and maintains traction.
- When descending, apply enough brake to maintain control, but avoid locking your bike's wheels.
- Avoid trails that are obviously wet and muddy to avoid trail damage.
- Cross streams slowly, at a 90-degree angle to the stream. Walking may be preferable as stream bottoms are often slippery.

The Tread Lightly! Guide To Responsible Mountain Biking contains more detailed and informative information when riding in the great outdoors so check it out and adopt their policies. It makes sense and benefits everyone.